

AMENDMENTS TO THE CLAIMS

The following listing of the claims will replace all prior versions, and listings, of claims in the application.

LISTING OF THE CLAIMS:

Please amend the claims as follows:

Claim 1. (Currently Amended): A method of manufacturing a plant finished product, comprising the step of processing a lignin-containing plant or a processed material thereof with a high-temperature and high-pressure gas having a temperature of 140 to [[500°C]] 250°C and a pressure of [[0.1]] 0.25 to [[100]] 4.5 MPa, under conditions where an oxygen concentration is 0 to 1 µg/mL.

Claim 2. (Currently Amended): The method of manufacturing a plant finished product according to claim 1, wherein the lignin-containing plant or the processed material thereof is processed for 1 to 3,600 seconds.

Claim 3. (Currently Amended): The method of manufacturing a plant finished product according to claim 1, wherein the lignin-containing plant or the processed material thereof is processed for 10 to 1,200 seconds with a gas having a temperature of 160 to 250°C and a pressure of 0.5 to 4.5 MPa, under conditions where an oxygen concentration is 0 to 1 µg/mL.

Claim 4. (Previously Presented): The method of manufacturing a plant finished product according to claim 1, wherein the gas is derived from a deaerated liquid.

Claim 5. (Previously Presented): The method of manufacturing a plant finished product according to claim 1, wherein a gas having an oxygen concentration of 0 to 1 µg/mL is used to purge a processing container before processing.

Claim 6. (Original): The method of manufacturing a plant finished product according to claim 5, wherein the gas having an oxygen concentration of 0 to 1 $\mu\text{g/mL}$ is an inert gas, carbon dioxide, or deoxygenated gas.

Claim 7. (Canceled).

Claim 8. (Currently Amended): The method of manufacturing a plant finished product according to claim [[7]]1, wherein the lignin-containing plant or the processed material thereof is at least one selected from grains, trees, teas, processed materials thereof, and a by-product of mashing.

Claims 9-20. (Canceled).

Claim 21. (Currently Amended): A method of manufacturing a composition containing vanillin, comprising the step of processing a plant containing lignin or a processed material thereof with a high-temperature and high-pressure gas having a temperature of 140 to [[500°C]] 250°C and a pressure of [[0.1]] 0.25 to [[100]] 4.5 MPa under conditions having an oxygen concentration of 0 to 1 $\mu\text{g/mL}$ to increase the amount of vanillin contained therein.

Claim 22. (Canceled).

Claim 23. (Previously Presented): The method of manufacturing a composition containing vanillin according to claim 21, wherein the high-temperature and high-pressure processing is carried out for 1 to 3,600 seconds.

Claim 24. (Previously Presented): The method of manufacturing a composition containing vanillin according to claim 21, wherein the composition containing vanillin is a raw material of food and drink.

Claim 25. (Previously Presented): The method of manufacturing a composition containing vanillin according to claim 21, wherein the composition containing vanillin is a raw material of liquors or tea drinks.

Claim 26. (Previously Presented): The method of manufacturing a composition containing vanillin according to claim 21, wherein the plant containing lignin or the processed material thereof is derived from grain.

Claim 27. (Original): The method of manufacturing a composition containing vanillin according to claim 26, wherein the grain is malt.

Claim 28. (Previously Presented): The method of manufacturing a composition containing vanillin according to claim 21, wherein the vanillin content of the composition containing vanillin is three times or more compared to that of the plant containing lignin or the processed material thereof before high-temperature and high-pressure processing.

Claim 29. (Previously Presented): The method of manufacturing a composition containing vanillin according to claim 21, comprising a step of exposing a product obtained through high-temperature and high-pressure processing to a low pressure from a high pressure to transpire moisture and puff out the product.

Claim 30. (Previously Presented): The method of manufacturing a composition containing vanillin according to claim 21, wherein an extruder is used.

Claim 31. (Previously Presented): The method of manufacturing a composition containing vanillin according to claim 29, wherein the composition containing vanillin is puffed out into a stick-like shape, a cylindrical column shape, a polygonal prism shape, a spherical shape, or a polyhedron shape.

Claim 32-38. (Canceled).

Claim 39. (Currently Amended): A method of manufacturing a plant finished product, comprising the [[step]] steps of processing malt for 10 to 1200 seconds with a high-temperature and high-pressure gas having a temperature of 140 to [[500°C]] 250°C and a pressure of [[0.1]] 0.25 to [[100]] 4.5 MPa under conditions where an oxygen concentration is 0 to 1 µg/mL in a hermetically-sealed container, and taking out the resultant solid product from the container, wherein the plant finished product comprises an increased amount of low-molecular lignin-derived phenol compounds.

Claim 40. (Currently Amended): The method of manufacturing a plant finished product according to claim 1, wherein the lignin-containing plant or the processed material thereof is processed with the gas having a temperature of 160 to 250°C and a pressure of 0.25 to 4.5 MPa.

Claim 41. (New): The method according to claim 1, wherein the gas comprises water vapor.

Claim 42. (New): The method according to claim 1, wherein the gas consists of water vapor.

Claim 43. (New): The method according to claim 1, wherein the step of processing with high-temperature and high-pressure gas is carried out in a hermetically-sealed container, and wherein the method of manufacturing the plant finished product further comprises the step of taking out the resulting solid product from the container.

Claim 44. (New): The method according to claim 1, wherein the lignin-containing plant or the processed material thereof is at least one selected from grains, beans, and processed materials thereof.

Claim 45. (New): The method according to claim 21, wherein the gas comprises water vapor.

Claim 46. (New): The method according to claim 21, wherein the gas consists of water vapor.

Claim 47. (New): The method according to claim 21, wherein the step of processing with high-temperature and high-pressure gas is carried out in a hermetically-sealed container; and wherein the method of manufacturing the composition containing vanillin further comprises the step of taking out the resulting solid product from the container.

Claim 48. (New): The method according to claim 21, wherein the plant containing lignin or the processed material thereof is at least selected from grains, beans, and processed materials thereof.

Claim 49. (New): The method according to claim 39 further comprising the step of pulverizing the resultant solid product.